



Enlarged City School District
Committed to Excellence

Budget 2017-2018 PROPOSAL

0%
BUDGET
INCREASE

0%
TAX LEVY
INCREASE

Budget Vote

May 16, 2017
12-9 p.m.



Each year, the school budget process becomes more and more difficult due to a number of factors that have affected us at the local, state, and national levels. Many of our struggles are due to politics. Albany continues to shift the tax burden to the local level and the federal level of support for public education is in question.

We began this budget process with the typical increases in health care, contractual obligations, and the normal inflation factors. Despite those increases, we were able to close the gap between expenses and revenues by reducing costs where possible, staff reductions through retirement, and the continued use of reserve funds. It should be noted that a large portion of cost savings came to us through negotiated contract concessions. Reserves are similar to your own savings account and should be used sparingly as they are finite resources. As we reduced costs, we were mindful of student needs. We are, after all, here to educate our children in the most fiscally responsible manner possible.

63%
of the 2016 graduating
class had at least ONE
college course
completed prior to
graduation

The budget proposal being presented to the voters has NO budget-to-budget increase. The current Allowable Tax Levy Limit (Tax Cap) for Cortland Enlarged City School District is 0%. The Board of Education has decided not to seek a "super majority" and exceed the Tax Levy Limit. The tax levy will remain the same as last year.

I would like to thank the Board of Education, staff, and community members for their creative efforts and input during this year's budget process. You should be commended for keeping the best interests of our students as your compass and staying true to Cortland's Mission Statement.



Michael J. Hoose, Superintendent

YOUR VOTE COUNTS.

5.16.17

Polls are open 12-9 p.m.
See page 8 for polling locations.

At-A-Glance

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Visit our website at www.cortlandschools.org

PUBLIC BUDGET HEARING • DATE: Tuesday, May 9, 2017 • TIME: 6:30 p.m. • LOCATION: Cortland Junior Senior High School (CJSHS) Auditorium A meeting of the Board of Education to present the proposed 2017-18 budget to the public will be held at the CJSHS Auditorium, 8 Valley View Drive, on Tuesday, May 9, 2017.

Proposition #1 – 2017/2018 Budget

Shall the following resolution be adopted to wit: RESOLVED that the Board of Education of the Cortland Enlarged City School District (CECSD) be authorized to expend the sums set forth in the amount of \$49,576,887 and to levy the necessary tax therefore.

What this means: This yearly budget is the same as the 2016-17 budget, meaning no budget increase and no tax levy increase.



Proposition #2 – Buses

Shall the following resolution be adopted to wit: RESOLVED that the Board of Education of the CECSD, is hereby authorized to purchase four 66 passenger replacement school buses and one 48 passenger (with capacity for up to three wheel chairs) school bus, and that the maximum estimated cost not exceed \$630,000, or so much thereof as may be necessary, shall be raised by the levy of a tax upon the taxable property.

What this means: If the proposition is approved, the District will replace four 66 passenger school buses and one 48 passenger school bus through either a lease or purchase program. The anticipated cost of \$620,995 is eligible for approximately \$546,476 in state aid reimbursement. Replacing older heavily used vehicles that are utilized for student transport, the proposed purchases are part of a five-year replacement plan designed to ensure our students are transported on buses that meet the latest safety standards. Eventually the plan will preserve the resale value of buses traded in and provide all large buses are part of a warranty plan that will reduce parts purchases and repair expenses.

Proposition #3 – Cortland Free Library

Shall the Cortland Free Library tax previously approved by the voters of the District be increased from the current \$370,775 to \$375,663 beginning July 1, 2017, to be raised by a tax upon the taxable property of the District in each year for general library purposes and to continue from year to year until modified or repealed by a subsequent vote?

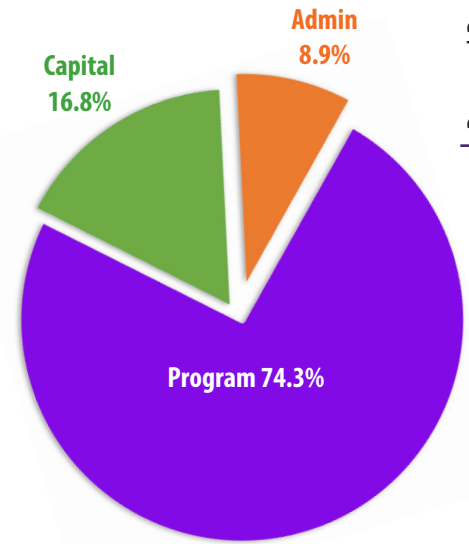
What this means: Funding for the library passes through the district but has no impact on school taxes or finances. The library determines the amount of the proposition.



Investing In Our Students' Futures

Three Part Budget Summary

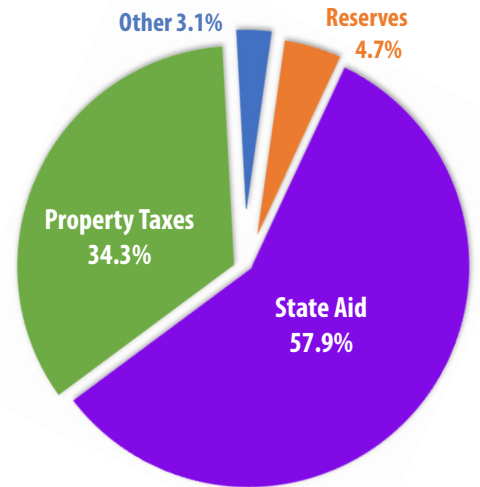
	2016-17 Budget	2016-17 Percent	2017-18 Proposed	2017-18 Percent	Dollar Change
Administration	\$4,546,662	9.2%	\$4,430,200	8.9%	-\$116,462
Program	\$37,293,999	75.2%	\$36,813,083	74.3%	-\$480,916
Capital	\$7,736,226	15.6%	\$8,333,604	16.8%	\$597,378
TOTAL	\$49,576,887		\$49,576,887		\$0



2017-18 Spending Summary

Revenue Summary

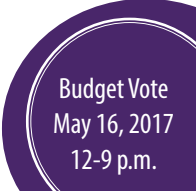
	2016-17 Budget	2016-17 Percent	2017-18 Proposed	2017-18 Percent	Dollar Change
State Aid	\$26,995,652	54.5%	\$28,706,663	57.9%	\$1,711,011
Other Revenue	\$1,597,592	3.2%	\$1,510,150	3.1%	-\$87,442
Reserves	\$3,976,711	8.0%	\$2,353,142	4.7%	-\$1,623,569
Property Taxes	\$17,006,932	34.3%	\$17,006,932	34.3%	\$0
TOTAL	\$49,576,887		\$49,576,887		\$0



2017-18 Revenue Summary

How is the \$49,576,887 utilized?

	2016-17	2017-18
INSTRUCTION	\$26,652,529	\$26,881,690
EMPLOYEE BENEFITS	\$13,304,799	\$12,637,623
OPERATIONS/MAINTENANCE	\$2,939,006	\$2,906,459
DEBT SERVICE/TRANSFERS	\$3,954,646	\$4,650,394
TRANSPORTATION	\$1,314,206	\$1,173,114
DISTRICT SUPPORT	\$1,411,701	\$1,327,607
Total	\$49,576,887	\$49,576,887



Q & A

What is a “tax levy limit” and is CECSO below its limit?

The tax levy limit is the highest allowable tax levy a school district can propose for which only the approval of a simple majority of voters (50 percent plus one) is required. The limit is calculated using a multi-step formula that takes into account any allowable exclusions (such as pension costs and capital expenditures). Any proposed tax levy above this limit requires budget approval by a super majority of voters (60 percent). The CECSO Board of Education has proposed a budget that includes a tax levy below its limit. This requires passage by a simple majority of voters.

How is the tax levy different from a tax rate?

The tax levy is the total amount of money the District raises from local taxpayers. The tax rate is the amount of tax residents pay per \$1,000 of property value. In 2017-18 the school tax levy is projected to remain the same.

How is my tax bill calculated?

Individual tax bills are calculated using:

- The assessed value of each property
- Any applicable exemptions (e.g. current homeowner STAR)
- The current school tax rate

Example of a tax bill

If my property has an assessed value of \$70,000, and the projected tax rate is \$18.21 per \$1,000 of assessed value my tax bill will be approximately \$1,275 not including exemptions.

Formula:

$$\begin{aligned} & (\text{Tax rate}/\text{thousand}) \times \text{assessed value} \\ & (\$18.21/\$1,000) \times \$70,000 = \$1,275 \end{aligned}$$

School Tax Relief (STAR) Information

STAR is a New York State tax relief program that lowers your school property taxes if your household income is less than \$500,000. This program only applies to your primary residence that you live in.

Basic STAR — This program credits you with up to \$555 of savings on your school taxes. This will be deducted on your tax bill or if you purchased your home after March 2015, you will receive a check.

Enhanced STAR — Individuals who are 65 or older, who own their own home with an income of \$84,550 or less are eligible for up to \$1,113 of savings on school taxes.

How can I find out more?

Homeowners must apply through their town assessor’s office to be eligible for this tax break. Learn more at www.tax.ny.gov/pit/property/star/default.htm.

Balancing the Budget

School boards must develop a budget that balances limited revenues with expenses keeping student needs in mind. The majority of our state aid increase is referred to as “expense driven” aid. This means that the dollars we spend on certain programs, services and facility upgrades generate revenue in future years. The tax cap calculation creates an exceptional challenge for our district. The board has made difficult decisions to ensure that the tax payers receive the various rebates for staying within the tax cap. The “2%” tax cap calculation resulted in a 0% tax levy increase, which provides no new tax revenue. Keeping the levy flat has required the board to allocate reserves to balance our budget. Allocating reserves, which are the districts “savings” accounts, for specific purposes assist with maintaining programming in the short term. The long term financial health of the district is sustained when utilization of reserves is coupled with the ability to replenish the reserves used. In order to ensure the limited dollars have the most impact on students the board is exploring ways to be more efficient.

With the tax levy limit, does the public still vote on a school budget?

Yes, residents will still vote on a proposed school budget on **May 16**.

MEET THE BOARD OF ED CANDIDATES

As of press time, the following candidates have submitted their names to run for a seat on the CECSO Board of Education.

For more information about the Board of Education, please visit our website at www.cortlandschools.org/BOE.

Janet Griffin — I am a product of the Cortland Enlarged City School District, having graduated in 1970. I then attended SUNY Cortland graduating in 1974 with a degree in Elementary Education. I began my career teaching second grade at Randall School and remained there for 33 years before retiring in 2008. I was then hired to be the Dropout Prevention Specialist at Cortland Junior-Senior High School. I was there until 2011, when I made the decision to run for the School Board.

I have served 2 three year terms and would love to continue supporting the students and staff of this district.



David Lemon — I grew up in southeast Pennsylvania in the suburbs of Philadelphia. After graduating from Norristown Area High School in 1983, I attended SUNY Cobleskill where I earned an A.A.S. degree in Fisheries and Wildlife Technology. I attended Virginia Tech where I received a B.S. in Fisheries Science. In 1990, I was hired as an Aquatic Biologist working for the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC) in Cortland. As a biologist for over 20 years I was responsible for Fisheries management activities in four Central NY counties.

After living in the City of Cortland for a number of years, my wife (Dr. Michele Barno) and I purchased land in Virgil and built our current home. We have two children, ages 13 and 8. Our older son, Daniel, is currently in eighth grade at CJSHS while our younger son, Adam, is in third grade at Virgil Elementary. Our experiences and interactions with the teachers and staff of both schools have been nothing but positive.

I have a strong interest in ensuring that all the children of our community receive the best possible education. As a taxpayer, I also recognize that education comes with a cost and it is the role of the Board of Education to balance the fiscal demands on the tax payers with the needs of our children. Striking this balance is no doubt difficult, but I hope that my service on the board will help CECSO continue to achieve this balance.



Board of Education Meetings are held at the Kaufman Center on Tuesdays at 6:30pm. See the District calendar or district website for specific dates.

Q & A

What happens if the budget is defeated?

If the proposed budget is defeated in May, the CECSO Board of Education can put another budget – revised or not – up for a vote in June or immediately adopt a contingent budget. If the budget is defeated twice, CECSO would have to adopt a contingent budget.

If CECSO adopts a contingent budget, programs and services will be reduced by \$58,000. However, the tax levy would remain the same.

Ten CJSHS student musicians advanced to Area All-State in February!



DISTRICT HIGHLIGHTS

District Highlights

1. CECS teacher Thane Doubet was named as CNYRIC February 2017 Featured Teacher. Mr. Doubet, a science teacher at CJSHS, was recognized as a leader in the use of instructional technology in his classroom.
2. Six students from CECS competed in the The Post-Standard Syracuse.com WCNY Spelling Bee. These students are: Grace Bauman, (CJSHS), Zack Do (CJSHS), Matt DeRado (Franklyn S. Barry Elementary), Nicole Simpson (F. E. Smith Elementary), Zahara Petrella (Virgil Elementary), and Daniel Zhang (CJSHS).
3. Cortland musicians Liam Woodard, Nathaniel Derbyshire, Mya Romans, Luke Darling, and Jordan Thomas participated in the NYSSMA Solo Festival, each receiving an Outstanding rating.
4. Virgil Elementary School celebrated the third year of science night, an event consisting of experiment shares from students. This year Virgil had the most student experiment contributions yet!
5. F. E. Smith Elementary recently introduced an Innovation Lab, where fifth and sixth-graders are putting their skills to work and exploring STEM activities.
6. Parker Elementary School recently collected over 360 pounds of canned good items to donate to Loaves and Fishes. The school also raised over \$400 for Loaves and Fishes in a Penny War contest.
7. Randall Elementary School Randall Robotics Club participates in different robotic stations during recess, including the Sphero, Dash and Dot, a Vex kit, OSMOS, Meccanoids, and an outdoor Phantom Drone.
8. Franklyn S. Barry Elementary School now has a rock climbing wall for students to use during physical education classes.
9. CJSHS student Daniel Lemon performed extremely well in Cortland's local National Geographic Bee and scored in the top 100 in New York State, allowing him to advance to the State Championship.
10. CJSHS Senior Will Pace was nominated for the National Interscholastic Athletic Administrators Association Scholarship. Will was the male representative from Section 3 to receive this scholarship.
11. CJSHS Junior Kathleen Starr was nominated to serve on the New York State Public High School Athletic Association (NYSPHSAA) Student Athlete Advisory Committee. Kathleen met all criteria of the NYSPHSAA Handbook to possess this role.



Looking for more information on CECS? Our website recently received an update. Check out www.cortlandschools.org for some of the latest events around the area and in our schools.

STAY CONNECTED

FOR THE 2017-2018 SCHOOL YEAR, CECS will have a new way to keep in touch...

SchoolTool -- SchoolTool is a program that will allow students and parents online access to personalized information about a student's academic program and progress. SchoolTool will be a replacement to InfiniteCampus. From bus schedules to report cards and interim reports, SchoolTool will allow for better communication from school to home.

SchoolMessenger -- SchoolMessenger will allow CECS and all of the schools within the district to send messages via phone and email to parents and staff, allowing you to stay up to date on school events, emergency situations, closings and delays, etc. Only parents, guardians, or anyone who is designated as an emergency point of contact will receive these notifications.

FACILITIES UPDATE

The BOE continues to look for ways to stretch the tax payers dollars further while maintaining programs for students. Energy efficiencies are being realized as we have replaced over 5,000 lighting fixtures throughout the district, installed sensors that turn off lights automatically when the room is not occupied, upgraded our phone system, and implemented a network and control system to assist us with managing our heating and cooler systems. Energy savings are projected to be \$295,115 annually.

The wireless access system in all of the buildings will be replaced this summer at no additional cost to the local taxpayers. Cortland's allocation from the Smart Schools Bond Act is being utilized for this modernization that the students use every day.

State regulations allow us to conduct up to \$100,000 in renovations and repairs each year. By building this into our budget we can then generate up to \$88,000 in aid to reduce the cost of this type of project. During the 2017-18 school year, we plan to update the bathrooms that are located near the JSHS main gym.

The building condition survey identified nearly \$46,000,000 of basic needs for our aging infrastructure. The survey serves as a guiding document for planning the next Capital project.

The upcoming facilities use study will research how our buildings are being utilized and strategize how to best move forward to provide a 21st century learning experience for our students while being fiscally responsible. A committee has been formed (community members, staff members, and outside experts) to ensure that we are using our limited resources efficiently. Meetings begin in May and will be held at all schools. Minutes of the committee will be posted on the district webpage.



The number of students who graduated in June of 2016 from CECSO with an Associates Degree

14

Mission Statement

CECSO values all community members as partners in creating a positive learning environment for all students. This environment prepares all students to reach their fullest potential in becoming life-long learners, and successful, contributing members of the society in which they live.



\$424,704

the amount CECSO students saved in 2016 by taking college credits while at CECSO

Are you interested in working here? We're hiring!

Cafeteria workers, bus aides, bus drivers, cleaners, and substitute aides/teachers. Please visit our website at www.cortlandschools.org/employment to learn more.

For more CECSO news and information, visit the district website: www.cortlandschools.org

Budget Vote
May 16, 2017
12-9 p.m.

Cortland Enlarged City School District

Board of Education

1 Valley View Dr.

Cortland, NY 13045-3297

Non-Profit
U.S. Postage

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Syracuse, NY
Permit #4238

BUDGET VOTE • Tuesday, May 16, 2017 • 12-9 pm

POLLING LOCATIONS

- 1. All residents of the City of Cortland vote at the Kaufman Center on Valley View Drive
- 2. Virgil residents vote at the Virgil Town Hall on Church Street
- 3. Cortlandville residents vote at the Cortlandville Town Hall on Terrace Road

VOTING REQUIREMENTS

All voters must meet the following requirement:

- 1. At least 18 years of age
- 2. A citizen of the United States
- 3. A resident of the District for at least 30 days preceding vote

